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## Purpose Statement

To determine if introduction of wild chinook salmon and steelhead to the Upper Yuba River watershed is biologically, environmentally, and socio-economically feasible over the long term.

# Upper Yuba River Studies Program

The Upper Yuba River Studies Program completed a series of public meetings at the beginning of September, marking the end of Phase 1 of the program. The public meetings were held to report the results of Phase 1 to the public, and to receive input before preparing the study scopes and conducting the studies.

Since mid-September, the Upper Yuba River Studies Workgroup has been focusing on Phase 2, the investigative portion of the program. The Workgroup is also considering the questions and issues raised during the September public meetings.

## September Public Meeting Summary

Between September 7 and September 16, 1999, a series of public meetings were held to update the public on the Upper Yuba River Studies Program (UYRSP). The meetings were held in Olivehurst, Rocklin, Nevada City, Oakland and Yuba City. Approximately 400 people attended.

Each meeting featured a one-hour presentation of Workgroup agreements, a question-and-answer period, and an opportunity for one-on-one communications. A panel of Workgroup members outlined the history of CALFED and the Upper Yuba River Studies Program, the Workgroup agreements on process, team representation, issue areas, and potential study topics.

After the presentations, the public was invited to submit written questions and comments. The questions were grouped by topic and members of the presentation team responded to them.

## Public Comments Incorporated

On October 15, 1999, the UYRSP Workgroup met to discuss the public meetings and to consider comments and recommendations resulting from them. Summaries of the main issues raised at the public meetings follow.

## Expanding Participation

The workgroup is composed of three teams representing lake interests, river interests and agency interests, for a total of 52 people. Many public stakeholders commented that they would like the Workgroup representation to reflect more interest areas, include additional stakeholder groups (primarily property and business owners), and provide more involvement for Team alternates.

The Workgroup reviewed the issues raised by the public, and expanded the role for technical and team representatives and alternates to participate during Phase 2. Alternates can now attend and participate in all Team meetings, and attend all workgroup meetings. Time will be set aside at each Workgroup meeting for alternates to voice their thoughts regarding issues being evaluated.

## Public Input Welcomed

As with most public processes, stakeholders, the interested public, and the press are interested in access to information for the UYRSP. The Workgroup, understanding this concern, has consistently sought to inform the public regarding the studies' progress, while providing an environment in which stakeholders can freely exchange ideas.

To balance these objectives, the Workgroup determined that the existing meeting process was the best method to make progress throughout Phase 2. As progress continues, and before major decisions, the workgroup will continue

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to send newsletters, news releases, and hold public meetings to receive public input.

They agreed that the Workgroup meeting summaries and other decisions would be made available on the Internet. This will ensure that all information provided to the public and the press is consistent with stakeholder agreements.

Stakeholders who wish to stay informed of the UYRSP as it proceeds through Phase 2 have a variety of information sources to choose from, including future public

issue areas being covered, the Workgroup determined that it must show the public more clearly how important stakeholder concerns like recreation and the lake environment are being studied in detail as part of Phase 2.

### *Fatal Flaw Concept*

Several stakeholders were concerned that the Workgroup might influence the study process to avoid a fatal flaw concept – a single issue with so many potential effects

### *Potential Solutions Come after Study*

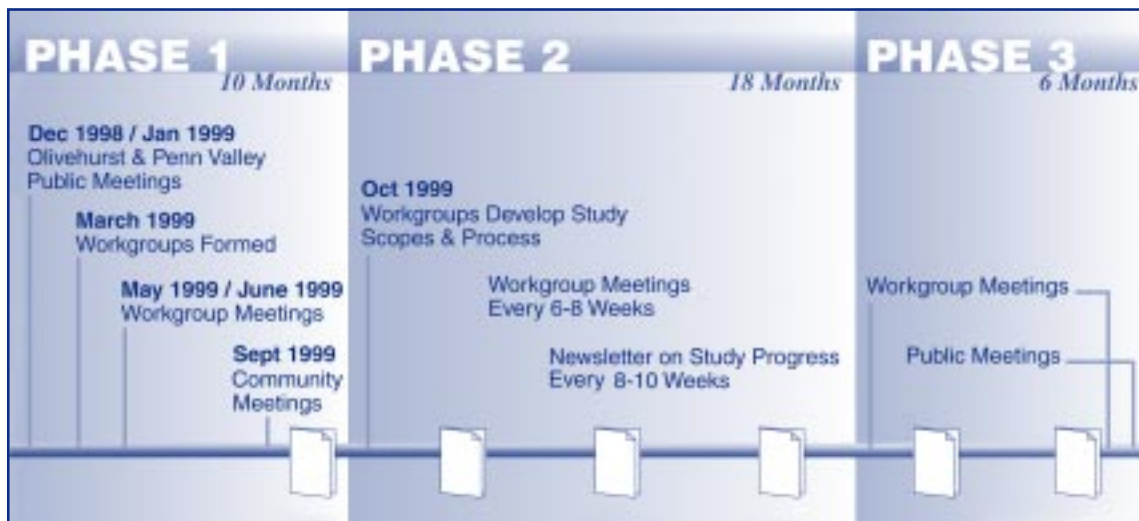
The public raised a number of questions regarding the use of fish hatcheries, ladders, and other methods as a possible alternative to altering Englebright Dam. There was a strong sense that these strategies could end discussions regarding the dam and the Upper Yuba River.

While these are useful suggestions, the Workgroup will not evaluate them in the feasibility study. The first step of the Upper Yuba River Studies Program is to determine

if the introduction of natural fisheries is feasible (see Purpose Page 1). If so, follow-up studies will determine the best method of achieving that purpose, which might include the use of fish hatcheries, ladders, and other devices.

### *Studies Will Show Impacts*

The public was very interested in the potential effects of possible



meetings, CALFED website, briefings by team leaders and workgroup members, and the info line. These sources are outlined on the back page.

### *Full Evaluation of Recreation and Habitat at the Lake*

A common concern raised during the public meetings was that subjects such as lake recreation and lake habitat were not given enough emphasis, or not defined as separate issue areas.

The Workgroup agreed that this was an important issue to be studied in Phase 2. They reviewed the issue areas carefully to ensure that these two factors would not be overlooked. The graphic on page 3 indicates where interests such as recreation, property and business values, and resident habitat and species evaluations are intermixed within the six established issue areas. To improve the public's understanding of the

that it could stop the study process immediately.

The public's perception of the UYRSP process's integrity is crucial to the success of the program. Since the Workgroup was established, its primary focus has been to develop a study process to gather credible information on a variety of stakeholder-defined issue areas. The objective is to develop a body of facts that can be used to determine what future actions, if any, are possible-not to discover a fatal flaw. The studies are not driven by any one position, but by the need to gather enough information to make a credible determination of feasibility. With factual, objective information, the Workgroup can make a recommendation whether restoration of some kind should go forward.

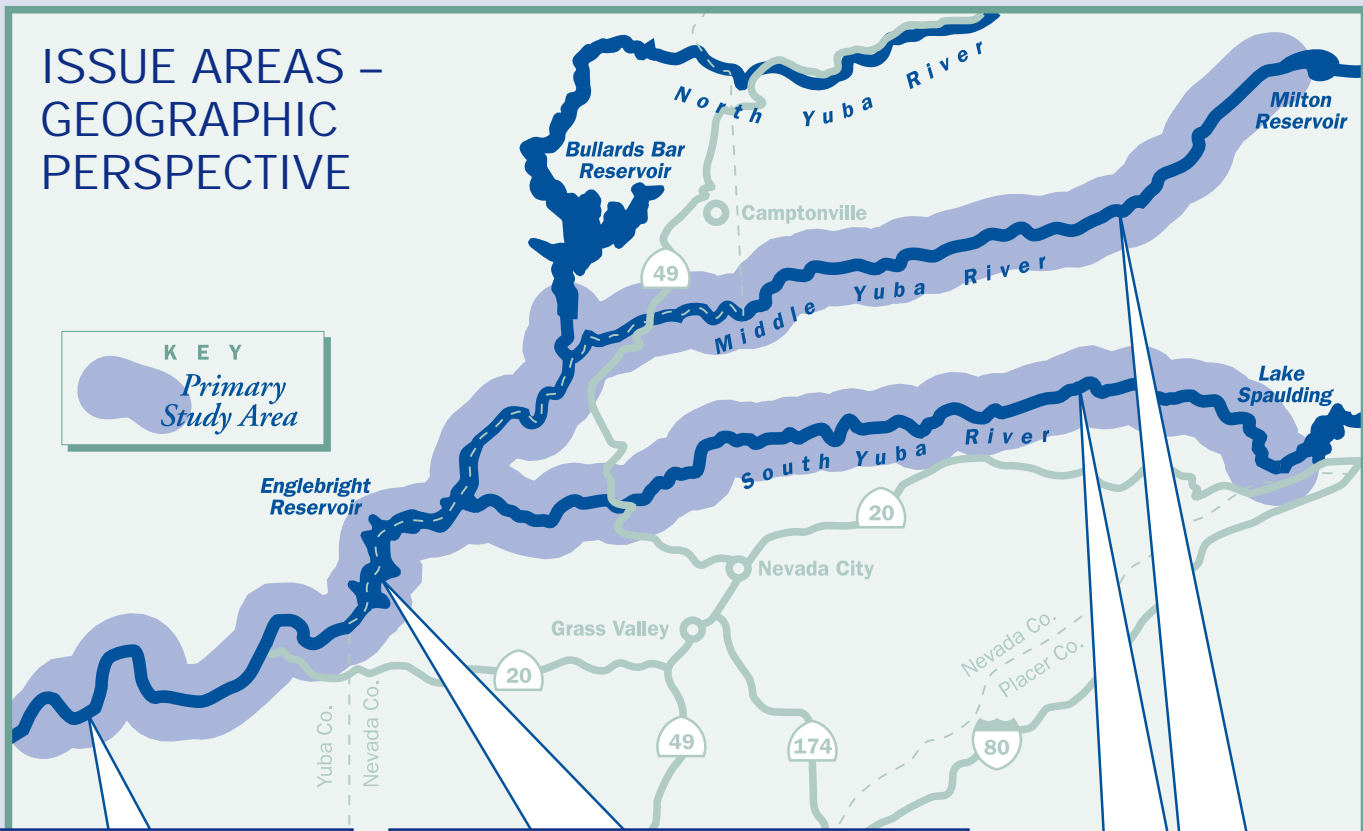
This approach has had a stabilizing effect on the process, and has allowed stakeholders to focus on creating an objective, credible process.

dam removal or re-operation on a variety of issues, including power generation, downstream flood protection, and regional water supplies.

These issues are at the heart of the UYRSP and the Workgroup is examining them carefully. The workgroup restated that no increase in flood risk is acceptable as an outcome of the UYRSP. The affects of these issues are precisely the purpose of the studies-to determine what affect might result.

As in other issue areas, the Workgroup has developed a series of evaluation factors that will help determine the requirements for habitat restoration in the Yuba river above the dam. For example, a key question relating to fish spawning habitat is how much water will be required to maintain habitat flows. Once known, the effect of flow needs on power, flood, and water supply can be determined.

## ISSUE AREAS – GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE



### **Downstream study issues:**

#### **Habitat**

- spawning bed quality
- water temperature
- riparian impacts
- affects on existing conditions

#### **Sediment**

- turbidity
- sediment transport
- toxins transport
- affects on existing conditions

#### **Flood Control Public Safety**

- hydraulic capacity
- re-operation implications
- review existing studies
- dam modifications
- affects on existing conditions

#### **Water Supply**

- agricultural & domestic users
- ground water
- affects on existing conditions

### **Lake study issues:**

#### **Habitat**

- existing flora/fauna
- restorable habitat/streambeds

#### **Sediment**

- characteristics
- what's there
- accumulation rates
- mercury methylation rates
- volume
- mercury & other chemicals
- removal options

#### **Flood Control Public Safety**

- accumulation rates
- dam modifications
- dam operations

#### **Economics**

- existing uses
- businesses
- property
- future uses
- power generation
- recreation
- water
- sediment value
- agricultural & domestic users

#### **Water Supply**

- ground water
- potential system improvements

### **Upstream study issues:**

#### **Habitat**

- water flow/supplies
- existing & restorable habitat
- fish passage barriers

#### **Sediment**

- sources of sediment/mercury
- sediment loads
- water temperatures

#### **Economics**

- future uses
- non-use value

#### **Water Supply**

- water diversions
- power generation
- re-operation
- water availability
- dam modifications

The study will look at issues outside of the Primary Study Area as appropriate, including areas in Yuba, Sutter, Placer and Sierra counties.

# Endangered Species, CALFED & the Upper Yuba River Studies Program

CALFED's interest in species recovery throughout rivers and streams in the Central Valley, including the Upper Yuba River arises from the synergy between CALFED's mission, the Endangered Species Act, and the Upper Yuba River.

## Endangered Species

The era of water development in California interrupted the spawning habits

of a number of anadromous fish species. A number of species, such as the spring-run Chinook salmon and steelhead trout, require cool water habitat. The populations of these fish have been in decline throughout the Central Valley. In fact, they are now listed as "threatened" under the Federal and/or State Endangered Species Acts.

A "threatened" listing has a number of real and potential effects. Among them are water pumping restrictions, land use

conditions, limits on commercial and recreational fishing, and potential economic impacts. Besides being an obvious indication of an imbalance in the environment, listing of species (especially if populations decline to the point where the listing is downgraded to "endangered"), can have devastating local and regional economic effects.

Clearly, habitat disruptions that cause species to decline is something to be avoided.

## CALFED's Role In Restoration

One mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term compre-

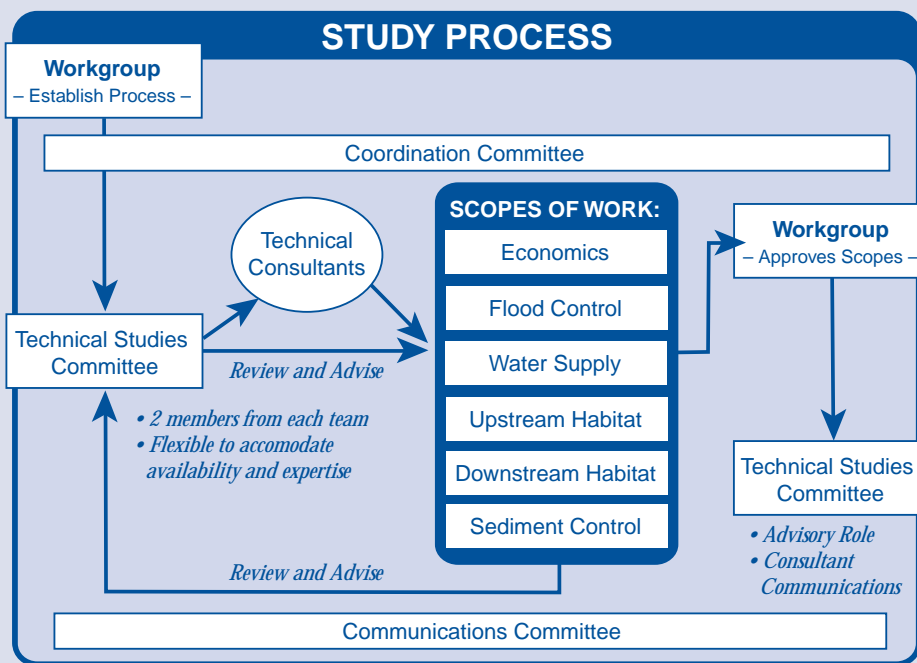
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## Upper Yuba River Studies Program Process for Developing Study Scopes

Phase two is the technical study part of the UYRSP. For the Workgroup to complete phase two successfully, it must develop clear, concise scopes of work that establish the framework for answering critical stakeholder questions. These scopes of work will detail the information that the Workgroup will gather in each of the six issue areas and technical experts will use them as roadmaps during Phase 2.

At this time, the scopes of work are still under development. The Workgroup has given the Technical Studies Committee a series of steps to follow in developing the scopes of work. The Study Process chart below shows those:

The Workgroup is scheduled to meet again in mid-January 2000 to discuss and approve the final scopes for each of the six issue areas.



## What Are The Next Steps?

The Workgroup's next steps include the following actions:

- Developing scopes of work
- Ongoing education efforts
- Conducting on-going tours of Englebright, the river community, and select areas of the watershed
- Developing a process for the workgroup to agree on criteria and a step-by-step decision making process

## Organizational Structure - Phase Two

The Workgroup discussed a variety of organizational options to facilitate Phase 2 implementation. They agreed that committee structures would allow for the most efficient development and execution of the study scopes. Three committees will guide phase two, including a Technical Studies Committee, a Coordination Committee, and a Communication Committee. Participation in the Technical Studies Committee will be flexible based on expertise, availability, and desire to participate. Each team leader will participate in all the committees. The Workgroup will draft and circulate a Committee Role/Scope of Decisions for each committee at the next Workgroup meeting.



Continued from page 4

hensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System. By identifying opportunities for habitat restoration, CALFED hopes to improve habitat for native species whose populations are in decline. CALFED is seeking restoration opportunities throughout the state that present the greatest level of habitat benefit

with the least potential for social, economic, and political fall-out. Each site identified by CALFED will undergo rigorous examination with significant stakeholder input, before any action is taken.

### The Upper Yuba River

The Yuba River above Englebright Dam may present one such opportunity. If

restoration and introduction is feasible, stretches of the Upper Yuba River could provide a significant amount of habitat for spring-run Chinook and Steelhead. Opening this habitat may help salmon and steelhead trout populations on the Yuba River flourish and avoid implications of the Endangered Species Act.

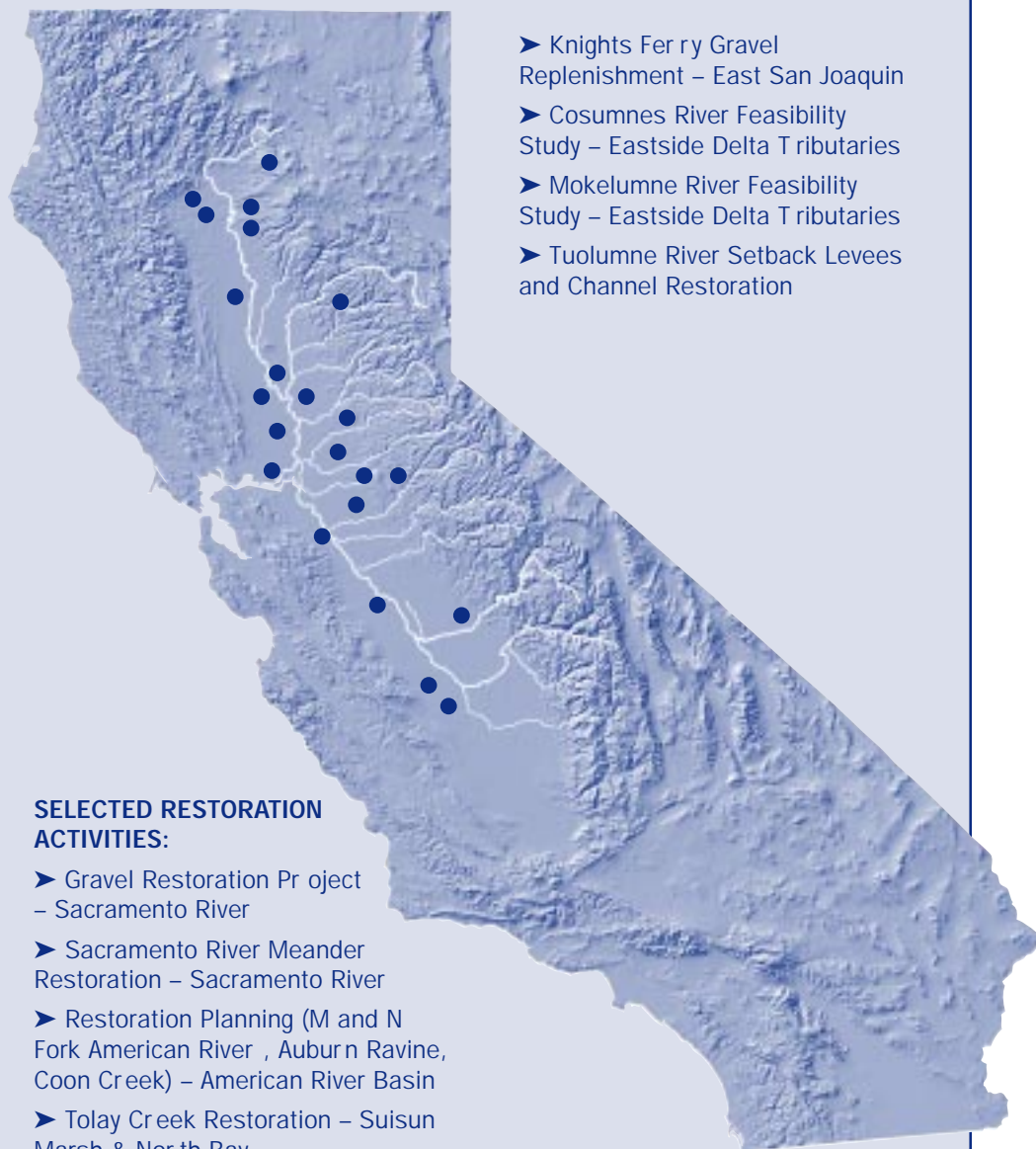
## CALFED Restorations Statewide

A number of questions raised during the public meetings reflected a concern that CALFED was targeting Englebright and the Yuba River to the exclusion of other facilities on other rivers.

CALFED's selection of Englebright is part of a statewide program to look at a variety of facilities and how they can be improved to aid in the recovery of fisheries. The Yuba River is part of a comprehensive environmental restoration program and similar efforts are being made in other watersheds.

In the past several years, CALFED has funded over 250 projects designed either to restore habitat, to gather information for developing future projects, or to conduct special studies to better understand ecological problems in the Bay-Delta system. A look at the graphic shows that CALFED is encouraging restoration throughout the state. Numerous other projects have been funded to evaluate or improve fish passage at other locations throughout the Central Valley. These have been of a smaller scale than the Upper Yuba River Studies Program investigations, but have included passage evaluations or improvements on the Sacramento River, San Joaquin River and their tributaries.

Other improvement activities are planned or completed on streams such as Battle Creek, Mill Creek, Clear Creek, Big Chico Creek, Butte Slough, Sutter Bypass, and the Mokelumne River.



## CALFED Bay-Delta Program

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## Upper Yuba River Studies Program Issue #2



*Yes, please add me to the  
Upper Yuba River Studies  
Program mailing list to  
receive information and  
advance notification of  
upcoming public meetings.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip this form and mail it to:*  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
Upper Yuba River Studies Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814



## Where to Find Information on the Upper Yuba River Studies Program

Program website

<http://calfed.ca.gov>

(select *Programs*, then select  
*Upper Yuba River Studies Program*)

Toll-free public  
information telephone line

1-800-700-5752

CALFED News,  
EcoUpdate,  
factsheets, and  
public meetings

available from:  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
Attn: Upper Yuba River Studies Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
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